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DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, 1-18 JUNE 1993

Rapporteur: Mr. Thomas STELZER (Austria)

Addendum

CHAPTER III. COUNTRY, INTERCOUNTRY AND GLOBAL PROGRAMMES

A. Africa (continued)

Burundi

1. The fifth country programme for Burundi, with a net indicative planning figure (IPF) of $38.2 million, was presented by the Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, who noted the programme's three areas of concentration: enhancement of development management capacity; transformation of rural areas; and strengthening of health and education services.

2. A number of delegations expressed support for the programme. Several commended the presentation and expressed satisfaction with the areas of concentration, the focus (including that on human development) and the gradual use of national execution as a modality. However, they cautioned UNDP against holding too many round-table conferences and suggested that in strengthening the country's capacity to manage the economy, existing institutions should be reinforced rather than new ones created. The aid coordination role of UNDP was commended, as was UNDP support to management development and planning to build national capacity. While UNDP support to HIV/AIDS prevention was considered essential by some delegations, it was noted that United Nations agencies should coordinate their efforts in that regard. It was also suggested that more emphasis be put on regional cooperation.

3. The representative of Burundi thanked UNDP and the delegations for their support to Burundi.

4. The Assistant Administrator took note of suggestions by delegations, emphasizing that regional integration was a major objective, and collaboration on HIV/AIDS was being sought with all concerned. In addition, the rationale for round-table conferences would be further examined and those conferences held would be well prepared. She stated that efforts would also be made to enhance capacity-building in order to strengthen existing institutions. She confirmed that the country programme was the result of close consultations with the Government.

5. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Burundi.

United Republic of Tanzania

6. The Resident Representative introduced the fifth country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania (DP/CP/URT/5) with a net IPF of $80.1 million. He indicated that it had benefited from a thorough assessment of the previous programme and sectoral assessments of United Nations specialized agencies. Resources would be concentrated in five areas: improved macroeconomic management; human resources development; employment creation through private-sector development; HIV/AIDS; and environment and natural resources management. He emphasized that UNDP would support sustainable reform as opposed to measures taken for expediency and would therefore continue to target the social dimensions of adjustment. UNDP assistance would be closely integrated with that of other donors and would be less project-driven than in the past.

7. The Permanent Secretary of the Planning Commission for the United Republic of Tanzania traced the country's recovery programme and stated that efforts were being made to redefine and restructure the role of the public sector and to create an enabling environment for private-sector initiative. He also clarified that his Government saw the need for an integrated approach rather than a project-by-project approach and for activities by sector that complemented each other.

8. While several delegations supported the programme, a number raised questions, noting the lack of focus, which tended to undermine the credibility of the programme and made it difficult to assess impact. The lack of focus also reduced the chances for UNDP to play a role in the policy dialogue and risked marginalizing UNDP support in the country despite the size of the IPF. Delegates considered that the country programme was important in terms of capacity-building, human resources development and efficiency in coordinating external assistance. UNDP should be asked to support efforts needed by the Government to use external assistance in a more efficient manner.

9. Delegations made specific comments on the programme; a review of the use of expatriates as project personnel was called for; the comparative advantage of UNDP in the area of HIV/AIDS in the country was questioned; the participatory approach was seen to need reorientation; the success indicators presented were considered to be too broad to serve as true measures of impact; and assistance

to public service reform needed further thought. Questions were also raised on the issue of policy conditionality, it being noted that UNDP had not joined other donors in that regard. The size of the reserve fund ($25 million) was also questioned.

10. In light of the questions and comments, a number of delegations felt that the programme should be further focused and a report submitted to the Governing Council at its forty-first session (1994).

11. The Resident Representative noted that the fourth country programme had been too fragmented and informed the Committee that efforts were being made to close 35 projects, or about 30 per cent of the fourth cycle programme. He noted that UNDP activities on HIV/AIDS were in keeping with the Governing Council's view that UNDP should focus on the impact that HIV/AIDS was having on the capacity for development. As such, UNDP activities were not in competition with those of other agencies. Among the expatriates recruited for the programme, UNDP was relying on 40 United Nations Volunteer specialists to work at the grass-roots level; at the same time, an increasing number of nationals were being hired. He said that UNDP continued to press for human development in the debate on structural adjustment in the country. He assured the Committee that all necessary adjustments would be made to the programme and suggested that UNDP report to the Committee on the matter in the context of the mid-term review.

12. The Assistant Administrator and Director, RBA, stressed that a successful country programme was the objective and therefore proposed that UNDP report to the Governing Council at its forty-first session on progress made, taking into account the discussion in the Committee at its current session and the priorities of the Government.

13. Taking into account the remarks made during the debate by the Resident Representative, the Committee decided that UNDP should continue its assistance to the United Republic of Tanzania. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania on the understanding that UNDP would report to the Council at its forty-first session (1994) on the advancement of the programme in the light of comments made by the Committee.